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THE CANCELLATION OF DEBTS

Discussion of the allied debt of \$11,000,000,000 owed to this country increases as the days go by. Recently it received a great impetus when President Wilson disclosed that he had made an agreement while in Paris to urge upon Congress that it accept German bonds in lieu of the hundreds of millions owed us by Germany. Debate of this, as of all other questions, cannot but be productive of good and focus the attention of the people upon the inherent justice of the refusal of our Federal officials to con- sider for a moment the cancellation of the allied obligations. But a true conception of the whole subject is to be arrived at it is to be approached from all angles.

Many editors who have turned their attention to a discussion of the debt are prone to limit their observations to the relative expenditures of the various nations engaged in the war, and to the present state of their treasuries. In doing so they find that there should be a general cancellation of all inter-allied debts. Great Britain would still be the loser to the extent of almost 2,000,000,000, due to the fact that other nations owe her much more than her own foreign obligations. And if there be no debt cancellation, Great Britain would be a far heavier loser than is indicated only by what she owes the United States. Her heaviest creditor is Russia to whom she loaned \$568,000,000, the collection of which is exceedingly dubious. Merely viewed from the financial standpoint, whether or not there is a debt cancellation, sympathy is naturally extended to Great Britain.

But to consider the matter in such a narrow light creates a wholly wrong impression. It makes no account of the assets with which Great Britain, France, Japan, and the other allies find themselves endowed as a result of the war. England's liabilities, taken alone, are heavy, but when set off against her acquisitions they pale into insignificance. According to one of our own statisticians she came into possession of almost a million and a half square miles of territory, about half the area of continental United States. Most of that territory is situated in Africa, and is of immense potential wealth. Its resources are almost wholly undeveloped, although it is reported that many millions of dollars worth of diamonds have already been taken from the soil by British miners. It is certain that the years of the immediate future will see a miraculous change in the former German African territory, accompanied by an unending flow of gold into the British treasury and into the pockets of her citizens who invest their capital in African enterprises.

It has been conservatively estimated that the national wealth of Great Britain has been increased by \$100,000,000,000 as a result of her mandates and other miscellaneous acquisitions. It is true she cannot realize present cash on those holdings. It may be said that she is "land poor." But it is equally true that the United States is making no demand for immediate payment of the British obligations. There will be no opposition to extending them over a period of years making it possible for Great Britain to extract their total many-fold from her new possessions. So it is a fair presentation of the case to say that against England's debt to this country she holds new assets twenty times in excess thereof.

That is the point that should be kept in mind in any discussion of the allied debts. It applies also to the other countries which owe the United States money. Their receipts in reparations and territory were smaller than those of England, but their obligations, also, are smaller. For months to come much will be said of the well high insuperable financial burden under which Great Britain is laboring, but little will be said of her enormous increase of national wealth. Let the whole truth be told, that people may judge for themselves of the righteousness of our insistence on payment of the allied debts. We did our full part in the war, and acquired nothing from it. This money could well be used to help our maimed and disabled men.

GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE RESTORED

For several years the people have been compelled to put up with certain things in the matter of Federal government that are not in accordance with the will of the people. Extravagance and unnecessary expense were a big part of the program. In the November election they registered their disapproval of the condition in unmistakable terms.

We all watched with great interest to see what policy President Harding would announce for his administration, and the public is generally pleased with the idea that we are to return to the principles enunciated by the immortal Lincoln of "A government of the people, for the people, by the people."

There is little chance to misunderstand the intentions of the incoming administration and it is to be hoped that the new officials in carry out their program. The key-note of the Harding inaugural address was sounded in those words which declared, "the success of our popular government rests wholly upon the correct interpretation of the deliberate, intelligent, dependable popular will of America." That sentence recognizes the important fact that, in order to be intelligent, the will of the people must be based upon full information, analyzed and discussed in a deliberate manner, and, when thus formed, is dependable. In the opening paragraphs of his address Mr. Harding demonstrated his own correct interpretation of such a judgment of the people, for he stood steadfastly behind the decisions registered at the polls last November.

Particularly was this true in his comments upon our attitude toward the league of nations. In the course of the campaign Mr. Harding had said, "In simple words the issue is, that he (the Democratic candidate) favors going into the Paris League and I favor staying out." On that plainly stated issue the American people gave Mr. Harding a plurality of more than seven millions—a decision expressed after a keenly contested campaign had given the entire country full information on which to form a deliberate, intelligent, dependable popular will.

"Other issues decided by the election are also very appropriately summed up by the President, thus assuring the nation that in these respects, also, there is correct interpretation of the will of the people, for he says:

"I speak for administrative efficiency, for lightened tax burdens, for sound commercial practices, for adequate credit facilities, for sympathetic concern for all agricultural problems, for the omission of unnecessary interference of government with business, for an end to government's experiment in business, and for more efficient business in government administration."

Public confidence has been greatly strengthened by the inauguration of a Chief Executive who recognizes his position as one of service, not of mastery, and who proposes that the government shall encourage, not usurp, the activities of private enterprise. March 4 witnessed the dawn of a new era in American political and economic history.

The robins are with us and the note of the bluebird is also heard. Everything points to an early and pleasant spring. The winter has been mild and no serious epidemic such as has cursed our country for the past two winters has made its appearance. Business conditions seem slowly adjusting themselves to a more stable basis. We've much to be thankful for. Let's begin to lose our long faces and try the effect of smiling once more.

STREETS ONLY BY COURTESY

Roadways in European Cities Unpaved and Filthy Up to Comparatively Few Years Ago.

The oldest pavement of which there is any record in modern cities is that of Cordova, Spain, which was paved with stones by the Moors in the middle of the ninth century. Modern travelers think the original pavement cannot have been replaced, it is so bad. The Moors also caused water to be conveyed to the city in leaden pipes.

Paris was the next city to pave its streets; but this civic betterment did not take place until the year 1184, on which occasion an historian says, "The name of the city was changed from Lutetia, which it had been previously called on account of its filthiness."

Those old streets must have been very bad indeed, as it was the general practice of the citizens to keep swine, which roamed at large and wallowed in the mire of the public ways.

The streets of London were unpaved in the eleventh century, and it is uncertain just when the work did begin. Holborn was not paved until 1417, though it was frequently impassable from the depth of its mud.

Berlin allowed its streets to go without even a clearing or cleaning until the middle of the seventeenth century, and until 1801 it was a popular practice to place pig pens immediately beneath the front windows of the houses.

Every kind of filth and dirt was thrown into the streets of Warsaw up to the comparatively recent year of 1823.—Stray Stories.

HOLDS PROPERTY IN TRUST

Man Enjoying What Is Known as Usufruct Has Benefits and Responsibilities Under Law.

Our word usufruct is derived from two Latin words *usus*, use, and *fructus*, fruit. The Latin combined them into usufruct, the equivalent of our word usufruct, which is a term of law, especially of the Roman law and of those systems based on Roman law. Usufruct is the right of enjoying things belonging to another, and of drawing from them all the profit and advantage they will produce without destroying or wasting their substance. One title of the civil code of the province of Quebec deals with usufruct. This right may be established by law or by the will of man. A simple example would be this: A person sells the ownership of a farm to a son, but the usufruct to a brother for his lifetime. The brother enters at once upon the enjoyment of his usufruct and is called the usufructuary. He cultivates the farm and takes the revenue, subject to the obligation of making ordinary repairs. He must use the property as a prudent, industrious man would do, without impairing the capital. The usufruct of stocks would consist of the enjoyment of the dividends, or of a sum of money the usufruct would consist of the interest earned thereon.—Montreal Herald.

Letture and Conversation.

Letture to me is a most interesting study. It is like conversation, it must be fresh and crisp, so sparkling that you sincerely notice the utterance. Like most talkers lettuce is apt to run rapidly to seed. Blessed is that kind that comes to a head, and so remains, like a few people I know, growing more satisfactory and at the same time whiter in the center and more crisp. Letture, like conversation, requires a good deal of oil, to avoid friction, and keep the company smooth; a pinch of salt, a dash of pepper, a bit of mustard and vinegar, but so mixed there will be no sharp contrasts.

I feel that I am with the best society when I am with lettuce. It is in the select circle of vegetables.—Charles Dudley Warner.

The American Short Story.

The secret of the American short story is the treatment of characteristic American life, with absolute knowledge of its peculiarities and sympathy with its methods; with no fastidious ignoring of its habitual expression, or the inchoate poetry that may be found hidden even in its slang; with no moral determination except that which may be the legitimate outcome of the story itself; with as more elimination than may be necessary for the artistic conception, and never from the fear of the fetters of conventionalism. Of such is the American short story of today, the germ of American literature to come.—Bret Harte, "The Rise of the Short Story."

Is Wednesday Your Birthday?

People born on Wednesday (Mercury's day) will never make great fortunes, but will hold high positions, probably as judges. It will be a struggle till after middle life with them, and then a comfortable position. They are in danger of at some time losing their liberty, and their marriage may prove unhappy. They would make good orators, philosophers, doctors, astrologers, counterfeitters and vagabonds. They will be subject to heart disease, gout and nervousness, are not likely to live much over fifty years. They will marry three times, and have several children.

Substitute for Travel.

"Do you find the movies instructive?"

"Decidedly," said the regular patron. "By paying close attention to the films I know almost as much about Montmartre as some of the people who've been there."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Chinese Deeds and Leases.

It is reported that Chinese property deeds or leases often have 100 signatures. The reason is that land is often owned by syndicates and agreements must be signed by every member of an organization.

How to Live

Common Sense Comments on Health, Happiness and Longevity

By GEORGE F. BUTLER, A. M., M. D.

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WORK.

"Employment is nature's physician." Health is maintained by occupation. When one quits work he loses the pep that comes to him from doing something and being of some use, of responding to demands and maintaining a routine, and his muscles get soft, his internal organs go on strike, his appetite fails and he loses sleep. Work is necessary to growth, because through it one acquires strength of mind and body. Both brain and muscle grow strong by exercise, by assuming responsibilities, by bearing burdens and doing things. Work of some sort is as necessary to health as eating and drinking.

Idleness and inaction breed nervous prostration, fear, worry, gossip, crime, constipation, and a host of evils. We make friends through work, we find in it beauty, humor, pathos—all that goes to make up a full, normal life. Congenial work is as necessary to peace of mind as it is for the health of the body; it is the symbol and avenue for almost all that is worth while in human life. The happiest hours of your life should be when you are working, and you can learn to like any work you may be doing. But whatever your job is you should dignify and vitalize it by putting your ideal into it, giving your life, your energy, your enthusiasm, all to the highest work of which you are capable. Your heart must inspire what your hands execute. Your work sometimes may be hard and thankless, but like tough metal it serves to suit the needs of a strong man and is better suited to that purpose than sipping soft drinks at a summer resort.

Cut out your "grouch." If you have one, quit feeling sorry for yourself and feel sorry for others. When you pity yourself because you think you have a hard job your soul shrivels up, but when you pity others your soul expands and grows. When you are troubled with grouches and self-pity just remember that you are in a universal guild of toil, and the universal forces are infinitely adaptable to the poor jobs as well as to the good ones, and that someone must do the work—why not you? Any labor will be irksome if done in a discontented, unhappy spirit.

"Who sweeps a room as in his sight makes that and the action fine." To work, and to honor one's task by associating it with the whole; to cut out envy, jealousy and complaint, and replace them with noble traits would prevent much sickness and go a long way toward solving the labor problem.

Anyone can be healthy, happy and successful who holds the right mental attitude and who works with enthusiasm, determination and a right heart. When you work, cultivate calmness, poise, sweetness, doing your best, bearing all things bravely, living your life undisturbed by the prospect of your boss, or the malice and envy of the man out of a job.

Health and happiness are free if you but reach for them—occupation and the right state of mind are pretty sure to fetch them. The more useful work you do, and the more you think and feel, the more you really live. Then after your work is over for the day, give yourself an hour or so for self-examination, for thought, for body and brain rest, for amusement, and you will have a good conscience, a good appetite, and peaceful slumber. LEARN HOW TO LIVE.

Though no man can add a cubit to his stature, we can all make ourselves ill, and most of us can keep ourselves well. Most people will keep fairly well if they eat little; avoid alcohol and tobacco; take plenty of fresh air and exercise; keep the mind at work and the conscience at rest.

Let us shun something, at least, of our devotion to the almighty dollar, and regard the world as something better than a huge workshop in which we are to toil and melt unceasingly, till death stops the human machine. Let us learn how to play.

Nervous strength, power of concentration, of application to a task, of control of emotion, of decision, of inhibition and perseverance, in spite of distraction and fatigue, come only by exercise and practice—in short, by work.

If anyone wants a happy old age, he must first of all never betray his optimism; second, never brood over the past and the dead; third, work away to the last breath, to keep as much of his cerebral elasticity as possible.

The courage given us by our work is like the self-reliance which Emerson has made forever glorious. Like self-reliance, courage is ultimately a reliance on widening concentric circles of property which reach to God.

All defects in the air passages, as well as the unphysiologic conditions arising from them, must be corrected before one can breathe properly and be well.

Turkish Women Fine Linguists. It is no uncommon thing for Turkish women to be able to speak half the languages of Europe, and to have, in addition, a knowledge of ancient Greek, Persian and Arabic.

CRIPPLED TEAM TWICE DEFEATED

College Five Badly Whipped by Hope and Grand Rapids "Y" Fives.

Crippled badly, the Alma College basketball team was no match for either Hope College in Friday night's fray at Holland, or Grand Rapids "Y" at the Furniture City Saturday night, the first game being lost 51 to 10 and the second fray 27 to 20, a spirited rally against Grand Rapids failing to turn the result, although Alma outscored the "Y" almost 2 to 1 in the last half.

Without the services of Captain Dahlgren, Jimmy Beattie or "Hawkshaw" French, the Almates were in no condition for the game against Hope College, which has one of the fastest aggregations of basket tossers in the state, and although the crippled quintet put up a fine struggle against the hopeless odds, it was forced to take a 51 to 10 defeat.

In the first half the Maroon and Cream fighters were unable to locate the baskets, and the half finished with Hope leading the Presbyterians 28 to 2. In the second half the Maroon and Cream got its bearings, and held the Dutchmen to a smaller score than they rolled up in the first half, and also counted eight points for themselves.

The fray at Grand Rapids against the "Y" on Saturday night found the Maroon and Cream still badly crippled and during the initial half of the game the Furniture City aggregation had things very much its own way, rolling up 17 points, while the best that Steele's cripples could do was 3 points.

The fourteen point lead that was taken in the first half was pulled down to just half of that amount before the game came to an end, the Maroon and Cream warriors putting up a hard struggle in the second half, which allowed them to completely outscore the Grand Rapids eagles in the final half Alma counted 17 points in this half to 10 for the Furniture City quintet.

Waggoner and Kirker were the features of the Alma play on the disastrous two day trip that brought the 1921 basketball season to a close.

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